

Sutta Nipāta

Uragavagga The Chapter on the Serpent

Vasala Sutta The Outcast

Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi

the verses...

116. “A man who is angry and hostile,
an evil denigrator,
deficient in view, a hypocrite:
you should know him as an outcast. (1)

117. “One here who injures a living being
whether once-born or twice born,
who has no kindness toward living beings:
you should know him as an outcast. (2)

118. “One who strikes or attacks
villages and towns,
notorious as an oppressor:
you should know him as an outcast. (3)

119. “Whether in the village or in the forest,
one who takes what has not been given,
stealing the belongings of others:
you should know him as an outcast. (4)

120. “One who, having taken out a loan,
flees when pressed [to pay it back],
saying, “I am not indebted to you”:
you should know him as an outcast. (5)

121. “One who, from desire for some item,
strikes a person traveling along a road
and take away the item:
you should know him as an outcast. (6)

122. "A person who for his own sake,
for the sake of others, and for the sake of wealth,
speaks falsely when questioned as a witness:
you should know him as an outcast. (7)

123. "One who is seen transgressing
with the wives of his relatives or friends,
whether by force or through endearment:
you should know him as an outcast. (8)

124. "If one who is able does not support
his mother or father
when they have grown old, their youth gone:
you should know him as an outcast. (9)

125. "One who strikes or verbally abuses
his mother or father,
his brother, sister, or mother-in-law:
you should know him as an outcast. (10)

126. "One who, when asked about the good,
instructs others in what is harmful,
who gives advice in an obscure way:
you should know him as an outcast. (11)

127. "One who, having done a bad deed,
wishes: 'May they not find out about me,'
a person of concealed action:
you should know him as an outcast. (12)

128. "One who, when visiting another's family,
enjoys there a meal of fine food,
but does not return the favor to his host:
you should know him as an outcast. (13)

129. "If one deceives with false speech
a brahmin or an ascetic
or some other mendicant:

you should know him as an outcast. (14)

130. "If at the meal time, one verbally abuses
a brahmin or an ascetic that has arrived
and does not give him [any food]:
you should know him as an outcast. (15)

131. "One here who speaks what is untrue,
enveloped by delusion,
seeking to obtain something for himself:
you should know him as an outcast. (16)

132. "One who extols himself
and despises others,
inferior because of his own conceit:
you should know him as an outcast. (17)

133. "One who provokes anger, stingy,
of evil desires, miserly, deceitful,
without moral shame or moral dread:
you should know him as an outcast. (18)

134. "One who reviles the Buddha
or who reviles his disciple,
whether a wanderer or a householder:
you should know him as an outcast. (19)

135. "One not actually an arahant
who claims to be an arahant,
a thief in this world along with Brahmā:
this indeed is the lowest outcast.
I have explained to you
these outcasts that are spoken of. (20)

136. "One is not an outcast by birth,
nor by birth is one a brahmin.
By action one becomes an outcast,
by action one becomes a brahmin. (21)

137. “Understand that in this way too,
according to this example of mind,
the caṇḍāla son, Sopāka,
famed [under the name] Mātaṅga. (22)

138. “Mātaṅga attained supreme fame,
which is so very hard to obtain;
many khattiyas and brahmins came
to perform service for him. (23)

139. “He ascended the deva road,
the dustless great path;
having expunged sensual lust,
he passed on to the brahma world.
His social class did not prevent him
from rebirth in the brahma world. (24)

140. “Those born into a family of reciters—
brahmins who specialize in the sacred hymns—
are often seen involved
in actions that are bad. (25)

141. “They are reprehensible in this present life
and have a bad destination in a future life;
their social class does not prevent them
from a bad destination or reproach. (26)

142. “One is not an outcast by birth,
nor by birth is one a brahmin.
By action one becomes an outcast,
by action one becomes a brahmin.” (27)